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PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE WORLD
SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
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STATUS OF THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Note by the Secretariat

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 47/92 of 16 December 1992, decided to convene a World Summit for Social Development at the level of heads of State or Government early in 1995. The Assembly also decided to establish a Preparatory Committee open to the participation of all States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies. The Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development held its organizational session in April 1993 and, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General to provide the Preparatory Committee with information on the activities being carried out with regard to mobilization of voluntary resources.

2. Also, in its resolution 48/100 of 20 December 1993, the General Assembly, inter alia, called upon the Secretary-General to report to the Preparatory Committee at its first substantive session on the implementation of the programme of public information for the World Summit for Social Development.

3. The present report provides a summary of the activities undertaken in the preparations for the World Summit for Social Development and outlines the main elements of a public information strategy.

II. ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN 1993

4. In paragraph 11 of its resolution 47/92, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to establish an ad hoc secretariat unit, including personnel of the relevant organizations and programmes of the United Nations system, to

assist in the preparatory process and the substantive work of the Preparatory Committee. Accordingly, a small secretariat has been constituted within the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat in New York. The Summit secretariat, headed by a Coordinator and under the responsibility of the Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, consists of six full-time professional staff, including one staff member seconded by the International Labour Organization and one by the Government of Denmark. The number of staff might reach a maximum of 10 persons during the course of 1994.

5. In order to ensure effective coordination among various organizational units within the United Nations Secretariat directly involved in the administrative and technical aspects of the preparations for the Summit, a Summit Management Committee was established at Headquarters. The Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat, the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat, the Office of Conference Services of the United Nations Secretariat, the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Finance of the United Nations Secretariat, the Office of General Services of the United Nations Secretariat, and the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat are represented in that Committee. Several meetings were held in 1993.

6. A planning mission composed of three representatives from the United Nations Secretariat visited Copenhagen, Denmark, in early September 1993 to hold consultations with the host Government on preparations for the Summit. The Government of Denmark has decided to hold the Summit at the Bella Centre, which offers excellent facilities to accommodate the conference and other requirements of the Summit. Aside from the issue of conference facilities, a number of topics were discussed with the Danish authorities including media/public information, non-governmental organizations, security requirements, protocol, transportation, and hotel accommodations. It is envisaged that at least one additional planning mission will take place in the course of 1994.

7. At its organizational session, the Preparatory Committee requested the Secretary-General to organize, as part of the preparatory process, expert meetings focused on the core issues of the Summit, and to forward the results of these two meetings to its first substantive session. The two expert meetings, one on social integration, held in The Hague in September 1993, and the other on expansion of productive employment, held in Stockholm in October 1993, were hosted by the Governments of the Netherlands and Sweden respectively. The Secretary-General wishes to express his appreciation to the Government of the Netherlands and the Government of Sweden for their generosity and has the honour to transmit the reports of the two expert group meetings (A/CONF./166/PC/8 and A/CONF./166/PC/9) to the present session of the Preparatory Committee.

8. To ensure effective inter-agency cooperation, the United Nations Secretariat convened three ad hoc inter-agency meetings of the United Nations system: the first in April 1993 in New York, the second in July 1993 in Geneva, and the third in November 1993 in New York. Those meetings provided a forum for exchanges on issues related to the Summit with a view to harmonizing positions and facilitating contributions by agencies and programmes to the preparations for the Summit. Contributions by agencies and programmes of the United Nations

system (A/CONF.166/PC/12 and addenda) are transmitted by the Secretary-General for the consideration of the Preparatory Committee. Also, an informal paper outlining activities of the agencies/programmes as they relate to the topics of the Summit will be submitted to the Preparatory Committee during its present session.

9. Additionally, the Summit secretariat is aware that a number of parallel activities and initiatives have been and are being undertaken by various Governments, non-governmental organizations, and agencies and programmes on issues related to the Summit, such as workshops and seminars on topics related to the Summit. Such initiatives are strongly encouraged and all efforts will be made to provide member States with the relevant information.

10. The Preparatory Committee, at its organizational session, emphasized the desirability of promoting national preparations for the Summit and requested the Secretary-General to bring to the attention of member States the decision of the Committee to invite Governments to prepare national reports to "identify constraints and the measures required to remove them" in the three core issues of enhancement of social integration, reduction of poverty and expansion of productive employment. Notes verbales were sent by the Secretary-General to all member States, and additional information and suggestions on the three aspects of the response that Governments may wish to make were provided. As of the date of this report, the United Nations Secretariat has received national reports from the following Governments: Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Finland and Germany. A number of other Governments have also indicated their intention of preparing such reports. The Preparatory Committee will be orally informed of further developments in this regard.

11. Recognizing the importance of the participation of non-governmental organizations in the preparatory process and in the Summit itself, the Preparatory Committee, at its organizational session, adopted modalities for the participation of those organizations in the Summit and its preparatory process. In its resolutions 47/92 and 48/100, the General Assembly called upon the non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the United Nations and those accredited to the Summit and its preparatory process to contribute fully to the work of the Preparatory Committee and to the Summit. The Summit secretariat sent notifications to interested non-governmental organizations informing them of the convening of the Summit and its objectives, at the same time providing guidelines on request for accreditation to and participation in the Summit and its preparatory process. The Summit has since attracted considerable interest in the non-governmental community and a good number of non-governmental organizations have responded and requested accreditation. The Summit secretariat has evaluated these requests and is recommending to the Preparatory Committee the accreditation of 76 non-governmental organizations (A/CONF.166/PC/11).

12. It might be noted from the information provided in this report, that 42 of these non-governmental organizations regard themselves as international and 34 as national, that half come from the developing and half from the developed world, and that the 76 organizations come from a total of 29 countries, 19 of which are part of the developing world. By region, 22 organizations are from Asia, 20 from North America, 16 from Europe, 10 from Africa and 8 from Latin

America. Development issues are the main concern of 34 of the 76 organizations, while women and development is the chief interest of 18 organizations. It should be recalled that there are more than 1,500 non-governmental organizations that are already accredited with the Economic and Social Council. About 200 of them have indicated explicitly their interest in participating in the preparatory process of the Summit.

13. Over the last few months, meetings and briefings have been held with non-governmental organizations and with the assistance of the Non-Governmental Liaison Service both in New York and Geneva, and the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat, information on the Summit has been widely disseminated to those organizations throughout the world. The Summit Secretariat will continue its efforts to facilitate the participation of these organizations in the Summit and its preparatory process.

14. In its resolution 47/92, the General Assembly invited the Secretary-General to establish a trust fund and to mobilize voluntary contributions from public and private sources for the financing of the additional activities required by the preparations for and the holding of the Summit. The Preparatory Committee, at its organizational session in April 1993, welcomed the establishment by the Secretary-General of the Trust Fund for the World Summit for Social Development and requested him to report to the Preparatory Committee at its first substantive session information on the activities for the mobilization of voluntary resources. The Secretary-General sent notes verbales to all member States in September 1993, informing them of the establishment of the Trust Fund and inviting all Governments to contribute to it. As of the date of preparation of the present report, contributions have been received from Turkey and Liechtenstein. The Government of Denmark has made a written pledge. Further information will be provided orally to the Preparatory Committee.

15. The Summit secretariat intends to intensify its efforts in publicizing the existence of the Trust Fund, and its purpose and terms of reference, to interested intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as to foundations, private enterprises and concerned individuals, in accordance with the decision of the Preparatory Committee on the mobilization of voluntary resources. The Summit secretariat will also develop specific projects and activities related to the core issues of the Summit to generate interest among potential donors.

16. With regard to the financing of the Summit secretariat and related activities of the Summit under the regular budget of the United Nations, the General Assembly, in its resolution 48/231 A of 23 December 1993 on budget appropriations for the biennium 1994-1995, approved an amount, in rounded terms of $2.4 million for the Summit for the biennium 1994-1995, of which $670,000 are earmarked for public information activities for the Summit.

III. PUBLIC INFORMATION

17. The public information strategy for the World Summit for Social Development, developed by the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat in consultation with the Summit secretariat, the Joint

United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC) and other bodies during 1993, is designed to heighten public awareness of the issues, broaden substantive knowledge, and mobilize greater political support.

18. The campaign for the Summit will stress in particular the following messages:

(a) The United Nations system is deeply involved in global economic and social development;

(b) The United Nations is concerned with the implementation of the commitment of the Charter of the United Nations to promoting higher standards of living, full employment, and social progress;

(c) The Summit's main themes - poverty, employment and social integration - are of universal interest;

(d) Significant material progress has been achieved in the world in recent decades and international cooperation has played a positive role.

19. The campaign's target audience will be the media, non-governmental organizations and academics. Information will also be channelled to a wider audience through educational and cultural institutions, intergovernmental and parliamentary bodies, arts and entertainment communities, trade unions, religious organizations, youth and women's groups, and other appropriate institutions.

20. United Nations offices and personnel in the field are seen as essential partners for the advocacy of Summit issues. Those offices include United Nations information centres, the regional commissions and, especially, local offices of the specialized agencies. United Nations Associations and national committees for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) will also play an important role.

21. The Summit's timing offers the campaign an important additional impetus. As a central event in the series of international meetings and conferences scheduled till the end of 1995, the Summit will build on the momentum of the 1990 World Summit for Children, the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit), the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights and the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, while setting the stage for other major events of 1995, notably the Fourth World Conference on Women and the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations. The Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat will also take full advantage of the many media outlets and non-governmental organizations that are planning regular, consecutive coverage of these events.

The core Department of Public Information information programme

22. The core Department of Public Information information programme includes a range of products and services generated from within the Department of Public Information that will serve as the building blocks for implementation of the

overall information strategy. Much of the programme will be carried out during 1994.

23. Within the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat, the Development and Human Rights Section and the Planning and Special Programmes Section, both in the Promotion and External Relations Division, will produce print information products, liaise with media and non-governmental organizations and coordinate the planning of products and programmes with outside partners.

24. A Department of Public Information interdivisional task force has been established to coordinate the work of the Promotion and External Relations Division and the Media Division, which will produce audiovisual products and organize United Nations press, radio and television coverage of appropriate meetings, such as those of the Preparatory Committee. The Public Services Section will actively promote Summit issues through its speakers' bureau, and there will also be extensive collaboration with the Information Centres Programme Section, which works with the 67 United Nations information centres on programming activities.

25. Among the information activities already initiated are:

(a) Design of the information signature campaign including selection of logo, typography and colours for Summit information products;

(b) Printing and distribution of a Summit fact sheet in English, French and Spanish; and providing of funds to United Nations information centres for translation of the fact-sheet into local languages;

(c) Establishing of link-ups with key electronic databases and networks that have access to the Internet and other information systems for transmission of Summit information and official documents;

(d) Design of an eight-page newsletter that will feature basic news about the Summit along with other upcoming United Nations conferences on a bimonthly basis;

(e) Development of a proposal for a travelling exhibition that will serve as a centrepiece for both the Summit and the Fourth World Conference on Women later in 1995.

26. Other items that are proposed for the information campaign include:

(a) An illustrated colour brochure, providing basic information on the Summit, its objectives and, perhaps, selected relevant hard data, with 100,000 copies to be produced in the six official languages;

(b) A press kit on key Summit issues and relevant United Nations work in the field, with 7,000 kits to be produced in English, French and Spanish for use by major media and non-governmental organizations;

(c) Funds to assist United Nations information centres and information services in producing local-language versions of selected products of the information programme;

(d) Four "UN in Action" television programmes to be distributed to broadcasters world wide in Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Among those carrying "UN in Action" is the Cable News Network (CNN) "CNN World Report", seen weekly in 90 countries. Production would fall under ongoing activities of the Department of Public Information Media Division;

(e) An 8-to-12-page supplement in the 1994 issue of the publication "UN Chronicle", produced in the six official languages and designed to be printed separately and made available in bulk to non-governmental organizations, United Nations information centres and the general public;

(f) Fellowships for 12 journalists from five regions to attend a two-day pre-conference journalists' encounter and the Summit itself. The number of fellows could be increased if extrabudgetary funds are available. The encounter would also be open to all journalists accredited to the Summit;

(g) Regional projects, to be undertaken by selected United Nations information centres and services, to publicize the Summit to journalists, non-governmental organizations and university/school audiences. Projects could include round-table meetings, press conferences and seminars for journalists; symposia or conferences for non-governmental organizations; co-productions with regional media of newspaper supplements, radio and television spots, call-in programmes, docudramas and cartoons; and production of materials for schools. Nine such proposals would be chosen in different regions and United Nations information centres would seek local partnership to co-fund the projects;

(h) A commemorative booklet, similar to that produced for the Security Council Summit meeting, in English, French and Spanish;

(i) Coverage of five regional preparatory meetings by one Department of Public Information Information Officer and one local journalist;

(j) An Information Officer at the Professional (P-4) level and an Information Assistant at the General Service (G-5) level, each engaged, for a period of 18 months, in helping to implement the information campaign, undertake media liaison and public outreach, and respond to requests for information;

(k) A series of special radio feature documentaries within the "Perspective" series in the six official languages and selected local languages. Production would fall under the activities of the Media Division;

(l) Adaptations of three UNTV video programmes into the six official languages, which will be distributed through the United Nations information centres and services;

(m) Distribution of television and radio programmes and television spots, including funds for conversion to phase alteration by line (PAL) and sequential color memory system (SECAM) and for duplication and dissemination;

(n) Seed money for the co-production, with outside producers, and distribution of a series of television and radio public service announcements;

(o) Design and placement in major international and regional magazines and newspapers of a printed public service announcement in English, French and Spanish.

27. For the Summit and meetings of the Preparatory Committee, Department of Public Information coverage activities will include media accreditation and liaison, written press releases, press briefings, and radio, photographic and television coverage. Coverage of the regional meetings will depend on funding available.

Inter-agency cooperation

28. As one of the United Nations bodies with a specific mandate for inter-agency collaboration, JUNIC will play a pivotal role in the Summit information campaign. At its nineteenth session, held in July 1993, it agreed to establish an inter-agency task force on the Summit consisting of agency and organization representatives based in New York. That task force met at Headquarters on 15 September 1993 to review the Department of Public Information information strategy for the Summit.

29. JUNIC members are expected to carry out their own information programmes. In addition, relevant agencies and programmes have agreed to work together in a number of ways. JUNIC agreed to consider a proposal for an exhibition, designed around a central theme of the Summit, and linked to other forthcoming events including the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations and the Fourth World Conference on Women so that the exhibition, with adaptations, could be displayed in different venues.

30. It is proposed that JUNIC members highlight priority Summit issues through the Asimuth monthly video magazine series.

31. Through their field offices, JUNIC members agreed to highlight the Summit through their normal schedule of conferences, seminars, meetings and media briefings. Through their local networks, they could also assist the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat in the duplication and distribution of audiovisual and print materials, including videos, posters, press kits and brochures.

32. JUNIC members and United Nations information centres are invited to help to establish national committees and to identify local spokespersons and advocates who could successfully communicate information on United Nations activities and issues on the occasion of United Nations annual days and special observances (for example, the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty).

33. JUNIC members agreed to explore the possibility of pooling economic and social statistics in an informal database (preferably an existing electronic database within the United Nations system that could be accessed from outside the system as well) so that reliable, consistent information on education,

health, employment and other social indicators could be made readily available in one central place.

34. JUNIC and the Summit secretariat will also help the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat in creating a user-friendly bibliographic booklet citing the main United Nations documents (for example, State of the World's ... reports, the Human Development Report, and the World Economic Survey) to assist researchers in seeing the range of authoritative publications and information available to them from the United Nations.

35. The Summit could also receive regular publicity through articles and other information included in the regular publications (for example, The Unesco Courier, and Refugees) and services (for example, the UNICEF feature service) of JUNIC members.

36. The Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat will cooperate with intergovernmental bodies and provide them with information materials to be distributed at their meetings. Substantive contacts will also be made to explore the possibility of the participation of United Nations experts in their meetings, panels and seminars. A complete list of such events and contacts will be compiled, in collaboration with the Summit secretariat.

37. In September 1993, the three-day Department of Public Information/non-governmental organization's annual conference entitled "Social development: a new definition for security" provided one of the first venues for presentation of key ideas relating to the Summit.

Outside partners

38. A range of collaborative audiovisual projects are under consideration, including the production of documentary programmes, public service announcements and the distribution of audio/video products with Television for the Environment (TVE) (London, Paris), which is working on a documentary series on population issues; the European Broadcast Union (EBU); and CNN (Atlanta).

39. The Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat is also planning special agreements with news services (for example, Inter Press Service, Gemini News Service, Women's Feature Service, Depthnews, the Zimbabwe Inter-African News Agency (ZIANA), the Pan American News Agency (PANA) and the Caribbean News Agency (CANA)) to assure the production and distribution, particularly within developing nations, of news and feature articles on Summit issues.

40. Efforts are also under way to establish electronic link-ups with key electronic bulletin boards and databases, including the Association of Progressive Communicators (APC) (San Francisco and Rio de Janeiro), Gemnet (Philadelphia), Togethernet (Vermont) and Agora (Italy). These connections will facilitate instantaneous and inexpensive world-wide transmission of and access to Summit documentation and public information materials.

IV. CONCLUDING REMARKS

41. The main priority of the Summit secretariat will be to implement decisions and requests of the Preparatory Committee, in time for the holding of its second session in August 1994.

42. Efforts will be intensified to mobilize voluntary contributions to enable the participation of the least developed countries in the Summit and its preparation, and to undertake activities relevant to the preparatory process.

43. Closer links with other major United Nations conferences, such as the Fourth World Conference on Women and the International Conference on Population and Development, will be established by the Summit secretariat.

44. Apart from developing a needed programme of public information as outlined above, the Summit secretariat will seek close cooperation with national authorities and committees, and with non-governmental organizations, in order to benefit from their contribution to the preparatory process of the Summit.